UNITED
NATIONS

A S

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/53/870
S/1999/309
23 March 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 64
MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY - PREVENTION OF THE VIOLENT DISINTEGRATION OF STATES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 23 March 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement issued on 20 March 1999 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus concerning the situation in Kosovo (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 64.

(Signed) Alyaksandr SYCHOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-08130 (E) 230399 230399

/...

ANNEX

Statement issued on 20 March 1999 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus concerning the situation in Kosovo

Belarus regrets that a constructive, mutually acceptable solution was not found during the negotiations held in France between representatives of the official Yugoslav authorities and the Kosovar Albanians. The lack of tangible results in the peace process and the instability of the situation, which is increasing as a result of continuing terrorist acts, are a source of serious concern for Belarus.

In the light of such unfavourable developments in the situation, we believe that the imposition of diktat on the internationally recognized parties to the conflict is absolutely counterproductive. At present, there are no grounds for threats of the use of military force against Yugoslavia, which is defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity and which has repeatedly demonstrated to the international community its political will to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. The use of force can complicate efforts to reach a settlement and bring about a further escalation of the crisis, with unpredictable consequences.

Belarus supports the work of the Contact Group on the former Yugoslavia, which played a key role in initiating a dialogue between the parties to the conflict, and it commends the mediation efforts of the States that have made their contribution to a political settlement of the Kosovo problem. Belarus also highly appreciates the steps being taken by the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and calls for the continuation of joint international efforts to advance the peace process in the region. We look forward to the prompt resumption of the OSCE monitoring mission in Kosovo.

Belarus reaffirms its position regarding a settlement of the conflict in Kosovo, which should be based on unconditional respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and the non-use of force. We are convinced that only strict adherence to these principles can guarantee stable and lasting peace in Kosovo. This will also be facilitated by the prompt restoration of Yugoslavia's full membership in the family of European nations.